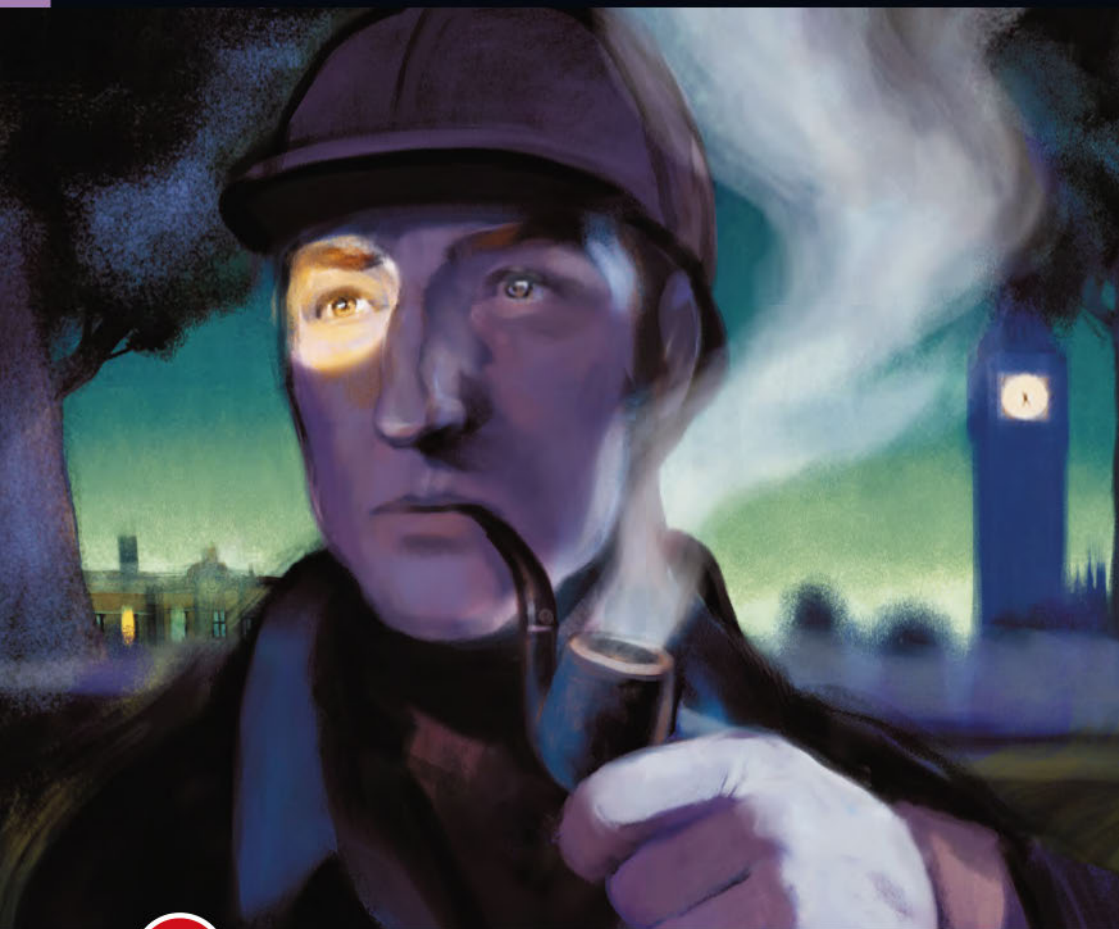


Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Sherlock Holmes Stories



free Audiobook



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Sherlock Holmes Stories

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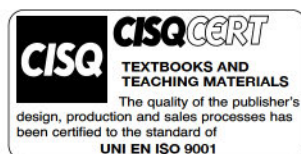
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Contents



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	4
------------------------	---

The Red-Headed League

CHAPTER ONE	Mr Jabez Wilson	11
CHAPTER TWO	An unusual job	19
CHAPTER THREE	Mr Wilson's shop	27
CHAPTER FOUR	The cellar	35

The Speckled Band

CHAPTER ONE	An early morning visitor	53
CHAPTER TWO	A mysterious death	65
CHAPTER THREE	Dr Roylott and Stoke Moran	73
CHAPTER FOUR	A dangerous night	81

Dossier	London in the Times of Sherlock Holmes	45
----------------	--	----

INTERNET PROJECTS	7, 63
--------------------------	-------

ACTIVITIES	6, 8, 10, 16, 24, 32, 42, 50, 52, 60, 70, 78, 88
-------------------	--

EXIT TEST	92
------------------	----

KEY TO EXIT TEST	95
-------------------------	----

KET	KET-style exercises
------------	---------------------

T: GRADE 3/4	Trinity-style exercises (Grade 3/4)
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This story is recorded in full.

n. track		These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the extracts linked to the listening activities.
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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
(1927)
by Henry L. Gates.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle created one of the world's most famous detectives, Sherlock Holmes.

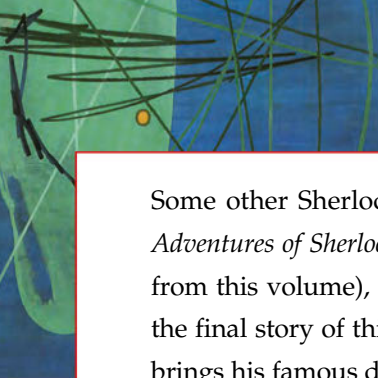
Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 22 May 1859 to an Irish-Catholic family. His mother introduced him to books when he was a young boy. In 1876 he entered Edinburgh University and began studying medicine. At the university he worked for Dr. Joseph Bell to make some money. Dr. Bell surprised his students because he often knew a lot about his patients simply by looking at them. He was a careful observer of detail and later became Conan Doyle's model for Sherlock Holmes.



A scene from the 1959 film version of **The Hound of the Baskervilles**.

In 1882 Conan Doyle became a doctor and opened his first practice. He did not have many patients so he began writing his first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). The story was a great success. In 1891 the monthly magazine *The Strand* asked Conan Doyle to write six Sherlock Holmes stories. The clever detective and his friend Dr Watson soon became very popular in Britain.

However, Conan Doyle was tired of Sherlock Holmes and wanted to spend more time writing historical novels. In 1893 he wrote a story called 'The Final Problem' and 'killed' Holmes. Conan Doyle's readers (including his mother!) were very angry and *The Strand* lost 20,000 readers. Finally, in 1901, Conan Doyle wrote another Sherlock Holmes adventure, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. His readers were very pleased and he continued writing Holmes stories until 1927.



Some other Sherlock Holmes books are *The Sign of Four* (1890), *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892) (the two stories in this book come from this volume), and *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894) – it is in the final story of this volume that Conan Doyle kills Holmes. He then brings his famous detective back to life in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (1905). Other Sherlock Holmes books include *The Valley of Fear* (1915), *His Last Bow* (1917) and *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* (1927) – this is the final collection of Sherlock Holmes mysteries by Conan Doyle.

During the later part of his life Conan Doyle became interested in Spiritualism,¹ and travelled around the world to talk about it. He died in England on 7 July 1930.

1 Decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false ones.

	T	F
1 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was introduced to books at an early age.	☐	☐
2 Dr Joseph Bell was one of his professors at Edinburgh University.	☐	☐
3 Dr Joseph Bell was the model for the character of Dr Watson.	☐	☐
4 Conan Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes story was not successful.	☐	☐
5 In 'The Final Problem' the famous detective was killed, and Conan Doyle's readers were very angry.	☐	☐
6 From 1901 until 1927, Conan Doyle wrote only historical novels.	☐	☐
7 During the later part of his life, Conan Doyle travelled around the world to talk about Sherlock Holmes.	☐	☐

1. **Spiritualism** : the idea that living people can communicate with the dead.

INTERNET PROJECT

Visit the Sherlock Holmes Museum

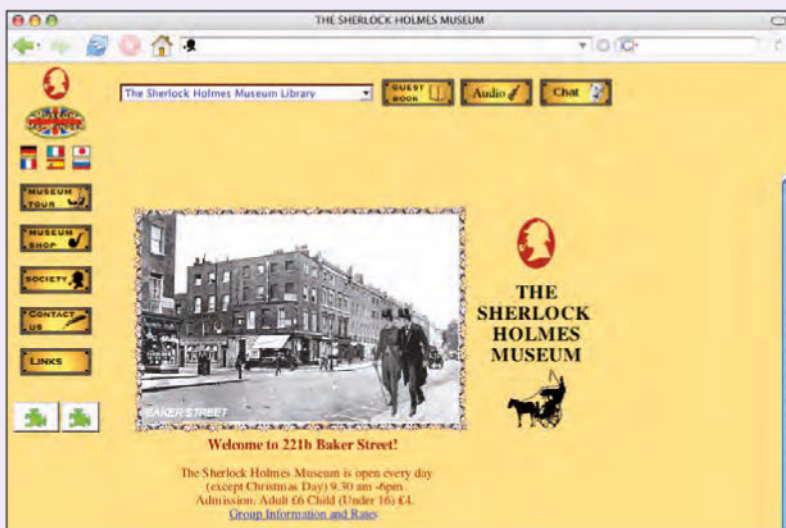
Sherlock Holmes is one of the most popular fictional characters in the world. In London there is a museum dedicated to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's great detective.

Connect to the Internet and go to www.blackcat-cideb.com or www.cideb.it. Insert the title or part of the title of the book into our search engine. Open the page for *Sherlock Holmes Stories*. Click on the internet project link. Go down the page until you find the title of this book and click on the relevant link for this project.

Go to the site, visit the museum and take a virtual tour of the study. Then answer these questions.

- 1 Where in London is the Sherlock Holmes Museum?
- 2 On what floor is Sherlock Holmes's study?
- 3 What objects can you find in the bedroom and study?
- 4 According to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories, when did Sherlock Holmes live there?

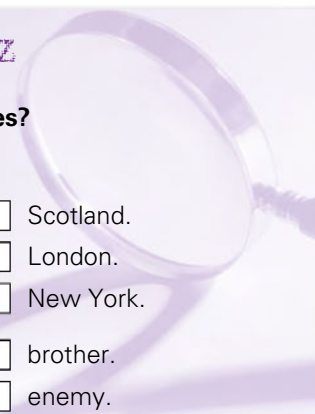
Write a sentence or two describing his study. Is it similar to a typical room in a house in your country? What are the similarities or differences?



Sherlock Holmes Quiz

What do you know about Sherlock Holmes?

Choose the correct answer (A, B or C).

- 
- 1 Sherlock Holmes lived in **A** ☐ Scotland.
 B ☐ London.
 C ☐ New York.
- 2 Dr Watson was Holmes's **A** ☐ brother.
 B ☐ enemy.
 C ☐ friend.
- 3 Holmes was very **A** ☐ rich.
 B ☐ funny.
 C ☐ clever.
- 4 He was a famous **A** ☐ detective.
 B ☐ writer.
 C ☐ policeman.
- 5 What did he smoke? **A** ☐ A cigar.
 B ☐ A pipe.
 C ☐ Nothing.
- 6 Who was married? **A** ☐ Dr Watson.
 B ☐ Sherlock Holmes.
 C ☐ Neither of the two.
- 7 Which cases did Holmes solve? **A** ☐ Only robberies.
 B ☐ Only murders.
 C ☐ Only interesting cases.

You can check your answers on page 95.

The Red-Headed League



The story's title

In English, a 'league' is a club or organisation. Think about the title of this story. What do you think a 'red-headed league' could be? Work in small groups and think of two possible interpretations. Then read the story to find out.

Before you read

- 1 Match the words in the box with the pictures below.

watch chain

sleeves

coin

newspaper advertisement



1



2



3



4



track 02

- 2 Listen to the first part of Chapter One. You will hear Dr Watson talking about one of his adventures with Sherlock Holmes. Decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 Dr Watson went to visit Mr Wilson on Saturday morning.
- 2 Mr Wilson had a red face and red hair.
- 3 Dr Watson waited in the other room.
- 4 Mr Wilson had an old newspaper in his pocket.
- 5 Mr Wilson had a tattoo of a fish on his left hand.
- 6 Sherlock Holmes liked studying tattoos.

T	F
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐



CHAPTER ONE

Mr Jabez Wilson



ne Saturday morning I went to visit my friend Sherlock Holmes, but he already had a visitor. His visitor was a large man with a red face, small eyes and bright red hair.



track 02

‘I see you’re busy, Holmes. I’ll come back another time,’ I said.

‘You came at the perfect time, my dear Watson,’ said Holmes warmly.

‘I thought you were busy,’ I said.

‘I am busy, very busy,’ he replied.

‘I’ll wait in the other room.’

‘No!’ said Holmes, and he turned to the visitor. ‘Dr Watson helped me in many of my most successful cases, Mr Wilson. I am sure he can help me with your case, too.’

The large gentleman got up from his chair and said, ‘I’m very pleased to meet you, Dr Watson.’ Then we all sat down.



The Red-Headed League

‘I know you like unusual, difficult cases, Watson, and this case is very unusual. Mr Wilson, please tell your story to Dr Watson.’

Mr Wilson took an old, dirty newspaper out of his pocket and began looking at the advertisements in it. I watched him carefully. From his clothes I saw that he was an ordinary British shopkeeper.

Holmes saw me watching the old man. He smiled and said, ‘I see you’re trying to be a detective, Watson. Well, it’s clear that Mr Wilson was a workman in the past and he also lived in China for some time. Recently, he did a lot of writing.’

Mr Wilson was very surprised. ‘How do you know all of these things, Mr Holmes? You are right — in the past I was a workman.’

‘Your hands show it, Mr Wilson,’ Holmes said. ‘Your right hand is bigger than your left. You used your right hand a lot.’

‘But how did you know that I wrote a lot recently?’

‘I looked at the sleeves of your shirt, Mr Wilson. The material of the right sleeve is much thinner. That shows you were writing at a desk.’

‘And how did you know that I lived in China?’

‘You have a tattoo of a pink fish on your right hand. That tattoo is only done in China. You see, I like studying tattoos. And there is a Chinese coin on your watch chain.’



end

Mr Wilson laughed loudly and said, ‘At first I thought you were extremely clever, but perhaps it wasn’t so difficult after all!’

Holmes looked at me and said, ‘Sometimes I think that it’s better *not* to explain my methods, dear Watson.’

He turned to Mr Wilson and said, ‘Did you find the advertisement?’

‘Yes, here it is,’ he said, pointing to it with his big, red finger. It was an advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle* of two months before.





The Red-Headed League

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE.

Man needed for new job at League.

Pay: four pounds/week. Work: office-based.

Job only open to people with red hair. Come to Red-Headed League offices, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street, London at 11 o'clock, Monday morning. DUNCAN ROSS

'What does it mean?' I said, after reading this strange advertisement twice.

Holmes laughed happily. 'It's very unusual, Watson, isn't it? And now, Mr Wilson, please tell us everything about yourself, your home, your work and this Red-Headed League.'

'Well, I have a shop below my house at Saxe-Coburg Square in London. It isn't a very big business and I don't make much money now. I only have one assistant in the shop. Luckily he wants to learn the business, so he accepts half pay.'

'What is your young assistant's name?' asked Holmes.

'His name is Vincent Spaulding, but he's not very young. He's an excellent worker and he can make more money in another shop, but he's happy with me.'

'It's unusual to have an *excellent* assistant,' said Holmes. 'Tell me more about him.'

'Spaulding loves photography and spends a lot of time in the cellar ¹ developing his pictures. He's sometimes in there for hours! But he's a very good worker.'

'Are there any servants in your home?'

'There's a young girl. She cooks and cleans the house. She,

1. **cellar** : a room below a building, under the ground.

Spaulding and I are the only people in the house. My wife is dead and I have no children.

‘About two months ago Spaulding came into my office with this newspaper in his hand and said, “I’m sorry my hair isn’t red!”

‘I asked him why and he said, “Well, with red hair I can get an easy job and make a lot of money. Look at this advertisement! The Red-Headed League is a club for men with red hair and it’s offering a job to men with red hair. You should apply for the job — you have bright red hair!”

‘I asked him, “What’s the pay?”

‘He said, “Four pounds a week, and you can easily continue working here.”

‘Well, Mr Holmes, two hundred pounds a year is very useful to me. So I asked Spaulding for more information. He showed me the advertisement and said, “I’ve heard that the club’s money came from a rich American, Ezekiah Hopkins. He was a strange man with red hair. He died and left all of his money to the Red-Headed League. The money is used to give easy jobs to men with red hair.”

““But thousands of men have red hair!” I said. “I can never get the job.”

““No, Mr Wilson,” said Spaulding. “The Red-Headed League gives jobs only to people from London. Ezekiah Hopkins was born in London and he loved this city. Also, only men with *bright* red hair can get these jobs. The club doesn’t accept men with dark red hair or light red hair. You can get the job easily!”

Go back to the text

1 Comprehension

Complete the following sentences. Choose from the endings (A-F).

- 1 ☐ Mr Wilson is
- 2 ☐ When Mr Wilson was young, he was
- 3 ☐ Ezekiah Hopkins started
- 4 ☐ Vincent Spaulding is
- 5 ☐ Spaulding developed his pictures
- 6 ☐ The Red-Headed League paid Mr Wilson

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| A a shop assistant. | B in the cellar. |
| C a workman. | D four pounds a week. |
| E a shopkeeper. | F the Red-Headed League. |

'An unusual case'

Look at this sentence from Chapter One: *This case is very **unusual**.*

In English we use the prefix **-un** before an adjective to mean 'not'.

For example: *Watson was not happy.* → *Watson was **unhappy**.*

- 2 Make the opposite of these adjectives by adding the prefixes **-un** or **-in** and then fill in the gaps in the sentences.

decisive popular comfortable kind
interesting expensive correct

- 1 Sherlock Holmes did not like cases.
- 2 The old chair was very
- 3 The man was to the poor dog.
- 4 She was never sure of what to do — she was
- 5 The children didn't like the new teacher — he was
- 6 The advertisement was — there were three mistakes.
- 7 His mobile phone didn't cost very much — it was

KET 3 Complete these letters. Write ONE word for each space (1-9). There is an example at the beginning.

Dear Mr Fields,

Do you remember (0)^{me}..... ? I came to (1) shop and bought some tea and sugar last week. You told me (2) a good detective in London. Please send me Sherlock Holmes's address because I (3) a serious problem.

Thank you (4) your help.

J. Wilson

Dear Mr Wilson,

I am sorry to hear that (5) have a problem. This is Sherlock Holmes's (6) : 221-b Baker Street, London. I hope he (7) help you.

Mr Holmes is usually (8) home (9) the morning.

R. Fields

T: GRADE 4

4 Topic – Hobbies

Vincent Spaulding is interested in photography. What are your hobbies? Choose one hobby and tell the class about it. Use these questions to help you.

- 1 Why do you like your hobby?
- 2 When did you start this hobby?
- 3 Do you need other people or any special objects for this hobby?
- 4 Where do you do your hobby?

Before you read

- 1 Look at the objects below, which we often find in an office. Add the missing letters to complete the name of each object. Then make a list of at least five other objects you can find in an office.



1 _ h _ _ r



2 _ _ k



3 _ o _ k _ _ s _



4 t _ _ _ r _ _ r



5 _ u _ _ _



6 _ _ b _ _

- 2 Now listen to the first part of Chapter Two, when Mr Wilson describes his new job. Which of the objects above (and those on your list) do you hear?

- 3 Now listen to the text again and complete the table below with the information you hear about Mr Wilson's new job.



Working hours	From (1) a.m. to (2) p.m.
Job description	To (3) the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
Things he must bring	(4), (5), (6)
Pay per week	(7) in gold.